

# Call for Expressions of Interest: Host Organization for Southern Voice

## Summary

[Southern Voice](#) is seeking a Host Organization for its Secretariat. Southern Voice is a vibrant network of fifty think tanks in Africa, Asia and Latin America that serves as an open platform for the discussion of SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. Hosting the Secretariat of Southern Voice is a unique opportunity to engage in the global debates on the 2030 Agenda.

Southern Voice is seeking a strong and competent organization that can consolidate the achievements and promote further development of the network by providing administrative and strategic support in its core areas of work:

- Research and policy analysis
- Global communications
- Outreach and policy dialogue and
- Network support

This call seeks organizations interested in becoming hosts of Southern Voice. The Host Organization provides the home for the Secretariat of the network. It acts as fiduciary host for Southern Voice programmes and provide substantive support to the Secretariat in fulfilling its role as hub of the network. It also holds a permanent seat in the Steering Committee, to actively engage in the strategic decision processes of the network.

The deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest is **14 October 2018**. Shortlisted candidates will be interview the week of **27 November 2018**.

For questions on this call, please write to: [info@southernvoice.org](mailto:info@southernvoice.org)

## Contents

Summary .....	1
1. About Southern Voice .....	2
1A. Strategy and Activities .....	2
1B. Southern Voice’s Membership and Structure .....	3
2. Roles and Benefits of the Host Organization .....	4
3. Application Process and Criteria .....	5
3A. Criteria .....	5
3B. Key Dates .....	6
Annex 1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Secretariat .....	7

## 1. About Southern Voice

### 1A. Strategy and Activities

Southern Voice is a vibrant network of fifty think tanks in Africa, Asia and Latin America that serves as an open platform for the discussion of SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. We developed our long-term strategy in 2016, including its new vision and mission.

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#### **Vision**

Southern Voice envisages a world in which power has been realigned between countries, resulting in fair and equitable engagement on global issues, and advancing a world in which people’s rights and needs are met and sustainable development is achieved.

#### **Mission**

Southern Voice aims to contribute to a power realignment in inter-governmental relations on the SDGs. It does so by stimulating, generating, disseminating and promoting high-quality evidence-based analyses on the SDGs, from Think Tanks of the Global South. It embeds Southern research in global discourse on the SDGs, to promote space for deliberative evidence-based policy making and to ensure that governments and the global community are held accountable for effective delivery.

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To fulfil our vision, Southern Voice works by:

- **Convening:** We bring together think tanks to collectively create new visions of development and inform governments, inter-governmental bodies, and other actors. We also create spaces for deliberative policy formation.
- **Research:** As a network, we undertake new collaborative research and combine the results of our existing research agendas to increase their impact.

- **Outreach and communications:** We consciously use our research and its results to build a power shift in global politics; we encourage and require transparency and accountability.
- **Capacity building:** Think tanks have high levels of skills, knowledge and competencies; one benefit of working as a network is that member think tanks can learn from each other and become individually and collectively stronger.

For example, some of Southern Voice's key programmes and activities include:

- The **State of the SDGs Initiative**
- A new programme of **Rethinking Development Effectiveness**
- **Engagements with key policy process** of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

Since inception, Southern Voice has been hosted by the [Centre for Policy Dialogue \(CPD\)](#) in Bangladesh that has supported the creation and consolidation of the network.

## 1B. Southern Voice's Membership and Structure

The membership of Southern Voice includes [fifty think tanks](#) in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

As a network, Southern Voice is accountable to its members. The **General Assembly** is the ultimate governing body of Southern Voice, and all members may take part in it. It ensures that members have ownership of the network's direction, strategies, research priorities and rules. It is held every two years. The General Assembly appoints a Steering Committee to oversee the network between Assemblies and holds the Secretariat to account.

The [Steering Committee](#) is accountable to the General Assembly for governance of Southern Voice. The Steering Committee provides advice and direction to the activities of the network and has oversight of the implementation of the strategy and programmes by the Secretariat. It is led by a Chair. It currently consists of eight members: two representatives from each region (Africa, Asia and Latin America), the representative from the Host Organization and the Chair.

The [Secretariat](#) is the central hub of the network and is accountable to the General Assembly through the Steering Committee. It leads, enables, and coordinates the members of Southern Voice to work together to achieve the network's mission and deliver its strategy. The Secretariat works in close collaboration with its members for the planning of research programmes, events, policy dialogues and others. This means that the Secretariat leverages the capacities within the network as much as possible, and when opportunities arise.

A Director supervises the staff of the Secretariat and its work plan. The ideal composition of the Secretariat staff would effectively cover the areas of work: research, communications and outreach, and programme management. It is expected that the size of the Secretariat will be between five and seven staff members, depending on the programmes being implemented. Its detailed roles and responsibilities are summarized in Annex 1.

The **Host Institution** of the Secretariat provides the home for the Secretariat. It acts as fiduciary and legal host for Southern Voice programmes and supports the Secretariat in fulfilling its role as hub of the network. The Southern Voice network does not have a separate legal identity, so its

host network must ensure that all relevant legal and tax regulations are met on behalf of itself and the network. More below on detailed roles and responsibilities.

## 2. Roles and Benefits of the Host Organization

We are seeking a Host Organization that can fulfil some fundamental roles and responsibilities, and we would also like to hear from candidates on additional ways to work together. For the day-to-day management of programmes and activities of Southern Voice, the Director of Southern Voice reports and coordinates with the Host Organization, keeping fluid and active communications. The Chair of Southern Voice provides intellectual leadership and oversight to the work of the Secretariat. The critical roles are listed below:

- **Legal and governance:** The Host Organization must maintain legal non-profit status, possibly as research institute or university, in its country, including all relevant regulatory and tax filings. Southern Voice does not have its own legal identity and would be fully based at the Host Organization in this respect. It must meet its own country's legal requirements, such as having a functioning Board of Directors.
- **Financial management:** The Host Organization provides fiduciary responsibility for the programmes and projects it implements, including managing the finances and financial reporting.
- **Banking:** The Host Organization must be able to initiate and receive payments in foreign currencies and from foreign countries.
- **Operations and staffing:** The Host Organization must be able to support the core activities of Southern Voice, including executing international contracts. Currently, most of the Secretariat's staff members work under consultancy contracts and are based in different countries. Southern Voice wants to keep the ability to have global staffing through consultancies or another method. It is also open to discussing utilizing staff from the Host Organization for certain part of its work with final candidates.
- **Fundraising:** The Host should be willing to support the fundraising activities of the network, in close coordination with the Secretariat and the support of the Steering Committee, particularly its Chair. This includes findings new supporters and supporting in applications and proposals.
- **Term:** The agreement with the Host Organization will last for at least three years based on annual performance review, with the possibility of renewal.

Benefits include:

- Hold a permanent seat in the Steering Committee, where it can provide inputs, updates, and be actively engaged in the strategic decision processes of the network.
- Engage with a cutting-edge network that is producing relevant research and policy analysis for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
- Be part of the global debates on sustainable development.
- Possibility of staff members to engage with the work of the Secretariat.
- Increase the organization's capacity to manage global initiatives.
- Receive an appropriate overhead to cover the costs of hosting the initiative.

## 3. Application Process and Criteria

Southern Voice is seeking applications that address the major criteria listed below. The application form also leaves space for candidates to specify their own criteria and requirements, as well as ideas for other ways of working together.

The application process begins with submission of the [Expression of Interest Form](#) by **the deadline of 14 October 2018** to [info@southernvoice.org](mailto:info@southernvoice.org). A sub-committee of the Steering Committee will then review the applications with the support of the Director and possibly independent consultants and other partners. The sub-committee will be self-selected from those current members of the Steering Committee that do not apply for this role.

The sub-committee will draw up a short list of top candidates and seek to interview them the week of **27 October 2018**. In preparation for the interview, shortlisted candidates will receive further information on the Secretariat's plans and budget to prepare for the interview. The selection sub-committee may also ask for additional information and documentation from shortlisted candidates. In particular, at this stage, it will be important to discuss the candidate's expected support and contribution to Southern Voice.

The Chair and the Director will then commence broader discussions with the top two candidates on various details on the Hosting arrangement. They may seek additional professional opinions, such as from current entities verifying non-profit status.

### 3A. Criteria

This criteria section is divided into three. The first section covers the “must have” criteria, and the second addresses priority considerations, which are not required but highly preferred. The final section covers other aspects that may be considered.

The call is open for Southern Voice current members as well as other organizations.

- **“Must Have” Criteria**
  - Based in the Global South.
  - Be a registered legal entity of a non-profit nature.
  - Be willing to preserve the independence of the network, which has its strategy governed by the General Assembly. (Southern Voice does expect that the Host Organization's Board will exercise some measure of oversight, especially related to finances, but it must understand and agree with the current governing structure for the initiative).
  - Have competencies and be willing to support the Secretariat in one or more of Southern Voice's core areas of work (Research and policy analysis, global communications, outreach and policy dialogue, and network support).
  - Have the administrative and financial management processes, staffing, and mechanisms that are conducive to the running of an international initiative such as Southern Voice, including management of programmes in foreign currencies.

- Can provide the necessary financial accountability for the Steering Committee and funders.
  - Can receive funds from and transfer to institutions and individuals outside of the host country.
  - Can execute contracts with entities and individuals outside of the host country.
  - Have staff members in key administrative areas that can speak English. While the Secretariat staff currently can communicate in English, Spanish, and French, the official language of Southern Voice is English.
- **Priority considerations**
    - Has an Equivalency Determination (ED) or is willing to apply for an ED. An ED allows private foundations based in the US to provide general operating support (also called core funding). The application will include a variety of information, including on non-profit status, charitable mission, and verification that it does not participate in political campaigns. For more information visit [NGO Source](#).
    - Be able to sub-grant to organizations in other countries (e.g. members of the network for research purposes).
    - Have experience in hosting similar initiatives or networks in the past.
    - Ease of travel to and from the country, including related to business visa restrictions on foreign nationals.
  - **Additional considerations**
    - Already supports the mission of Southern Voice.
    - Familiarity with the work of think tanks in the Global South.
    - Provide a competitive overhead rate based on services provided and funding to be received by the network.
    - Offer additional synergies or benefits not previously listed.

### 3B. Key Dates

Call opens	17 September 2018
Call closes	14 October 2018
Interviews with top candidates	27-30 November 2018
Final decision	06 December 2018
Finalize MoU and transition arrangements with Host*	March 2019

\*The time between the selection and the starting date of the new Hosting arrangement will allow for the drafting of an MoU and also for an appropriate transition between the current and future host.

## Annex 1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Secretariat

The Secretariat is the central hub of the network. It leads, enables, and coordinates the members of Southern Voice to work together to achieve the network's mission and deliver its strategy. The Secretariat is managed by the Director with intellectual leadership of the Chair.

The Secretariat is accountable to the General Assembly through the Steering Committee. The Secretariat reports to the Steering Committee on a regular basis in coordination with the Chair.

### **Responsibilities**

#### Supporting Good Governance

- Support the Steering Committee in carrying out its oversight and governance functions
- Support the General Assembly in carrying out its governance functions
- To lead the development of a strategic framework and use this as the basis for developing annual plans and budgets for approval by the Steering Committee
- To produce an annual report to the Steering Committee and a bi-annual report to the General Assembly

#### Managing the Network's Programmes and Activities

- Facilitate implementation of the annual plan by members
- Implement collaborative research programmes, ensuring quality standards are maintained
- Facilitate and coordinate the network, ensuring effective engagement and interaction of members and responsible representation of their perspectives in influencing work
- Execute the external communications strategy of Southern Voice.
- Coordinate an internal communications and information system that enables members to remain up to date on activities and opportunities in the network, encourages cross-member interaction, and promotes the mission and work of Southern Voice to external audiences
- Lead fundraising efforts to finance the activities of the network

#### Administration and Resource Management

- Maintain effective working relations with current and potential donors
- Ensure timely and high-quality reporting to donors
- Manage, in coordination with the Host Organization, the resources (human and financial) of Southern Voice, within the priorities set by the Steering Committee, and ensure transparent and timely reporting